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DIRECTORATE OF INTELLIGENCE

14 May 1986

**Opportunities for Increased Soviet Support
and Influence in Libya****Summary**

The limited Soviet reaction to US-Libyan hostilities during March and April underscores Moscow's longstanding desire to appear supportive while maintaining some distance from Qadhafi's actions. Currently, the Soviets are avoiding placing themselves in a position where they are compelled to commit their own forces to Libya's defense. We nevertheless expect them to increase their material support to Tripoli in the near future -- in large measure motivated by a desire both to support their client and to retain credibility elsewhere in the Third World. Over the next year, this support is likely to include: replacing and repairing damaged Libyan military equipment, approving new arms sales, and expanding intelligence sharing. [redacted]

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In return for enhanced support to Libya, we expect Moscow to attempt to exact a political and military price. Politically, this may include Libyan support for Soviet foreign policy objectives in a variety of areas of

This memorandum was prepared by [redacted] Foreign Activities Branch, SOVA/TWA, and [redacted] Africa/Latin America/Middle East Branch, SOVA/TWA. Information available as of 14 May 1986 was used in its preparation. Comments and queries are welcome and may be directed to the Chief, Third World Activities Division, SOVA, [redacted]

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the Third World -- areas, in some cases, where Libya now either goes its own way or even works in opposition to Soviet-favored clients. Militarily, the Soviets are likely to press for greater use of Tobruk port to replenish and repair Soviet naval vessels, and more IL-38 antisubmarine and reconnaissance aircraft deployments to Libya. [redacted]

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In the longer term, we foresee a potential for a more fundamental readjustment in Soviet-Libyan relations. If Qadhafi's current sense of insecurity endures, there is a good chance his willingness to accommodate a significant expansion of Soviet influence in Libya would increase. If this occurs, Moscow could substantially increase its cooperation with Libya in all areas and better position itself in the hope that Qadhafi would ultimately be replaced by a pro-Soviet successor.¹ [redacted]

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Whether Moscow would seek or quickly agree to an expanded relationship with Libya that involved an increased commitment to Qadhafi is unclear. [redacted]

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[redacted] they have so far demonstrated a willingness to sell him arms but not to give him heavy political backing. They have resisted signing a friendship treaty thus far, but if they did, it would signal that the USSR and Libya were moving toward a more fundamental readjustment in relations. [redacted]

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On balance, we believe the risks involved in considerably expanding the Soviet relationship with Qadhafi are likely to outweigh the potential benefits. While greater political and military cooperation would enhance Soviet prestige and deterrence in the Mediterranean and bolster an Arab client, such a move would make the Soviets hostage to Qadhafi [redacted] and increase their forces' vulnerability during US-Libyan confrontations or during a general war. The Soviets also would risk pushing Western Europe and moderate Arab states closer to the US. Moreover, [redacted] a new Libyan regime could result in their expulsion from Libya, just as they were from Egypt in 1972. [redacted]

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The USSR's most likely response to an opportunity for expanded relations with Libya, we believe, would be to modestly increase military support to Tripoli until Qadhafi was replaced by a more reliable and possibly more pro-Soviet successor. A less likely scenario would be for the Soviets to be drawn into a deeper involvement with Libya by a spiral of violent Libyan conflict with the West, especially if Soviet credibility in the Arab world came under sharp criticism. It is also possible that Moscow would be tempted by the potential strategic gain, and significantly expand its military cooperation with Libya; were it to do so, the decision probably would be based on an assumption that once so heavily engaged,

¹ The types of weapons systems Moscow could provide to bolster Libyan armed forces are detailed in the appendix of this memorandum.

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[REDACTED]

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the Soviets would then have an ability either to moderate their client or alter the regime. In our judgment, however, this scenario is the least likely. [REDACTED]

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Embittered Relations

One immediate result of the March and April confrontation between Libya and the US was the creation of a serious strain between Moscow and Libya, [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] Some Libyans also apparently misinterpreted Western press accounts to mean that Washington had given Moscow prior notice of the US air strikes and that Moscow did not pass on the information. [REDACTED]

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For their part, the Soviets took a strong public posture of solidarity with Libya both to reassure Tripoli and to maintain credibility with other Arab and Third World states. In private, however, Moscow was apparently angered at being excluded from the decision to fire SA-5 surface-to-air missiles (SAMs) at US aircraft during the March hostilities. [REDACTED]

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Short Term Opportunities

Despite Soviet-Libyan frictions, [REDACTED] Qadhafi has pressed the Soviet Union for a stronger demonstration of commitment to Libya. He almost certainly wants better capabilities to counter US naval and air forces. The USSR's cautious military response so far [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] strongly suggests that it will not, in the near term, commit any of its own forces to defend Libya from US attacks. Nonetheless, Moscow probably is contemplating how to exploit new opportunities to increase its political and military leverage within Libya. [REDACTED]

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Political Influence. Despite Moscow's extensive arms sales to Libya and the presence of 1500 to 2000 Soviet military advisers and approximately 4500 economic technicians, the Soviets do not appear to have any significant influence with the regime, with respect either to domestic or foreign policy. For example, Moscow would prefer Libya pursue Marxist-Leninist economic development to Qadhafi's version of Arab socialism, and is dissatisfied with his stance on the Arab-Israeli dispute and his political

[REDACTED]

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isolation in the Arab world. But it has not managed to budge Qadhafi on these issues. The Soviets also lack a natural base of political support; the absence of a communist party denies them an entree to the local population that could be used to promote Moscow's interests during a leadership succession phase or domestic upheaval. Qadhafi's isolation of foreigners, moreover, applies to Soviet and East European personnel as well as Westerners and has restricted opportunities to recruit pro-Soviet supporters. In one area of presumed frequent Soviet contact with Libyans -- the military -- the Libyans [redacted] distrust and dislike their Soviet advisers. [redacted]

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Qadhafi's apparent desire for a Soviet military commitment may provide Moscow with opportunities to expand its political influence.

- In Libya itself, the Soviets may press for greater access to Libyan political and military leaders at various levels of the regime, in order to improve their ability to monitor and influence internal Libyan politics. Optimally, Moscow may hope to be in a position to influence the outcome of Qadhafi's eventual succession.
- In the Middle East, the Soviets may press Libya to be more cooperative on a number of Soviet foreign policy efforts that Qadhafi has ignored or obstructed. Moscow would, for example, like Libya to cooperate in its diplomatic efforts to deal with the Arab-Israeli dispute and foster a rapprochement between Tripoli and Cairo to help draw Egypt away from the US. The Soviets also seek reconciliation between Libya and Iraq, Algeria, and Tunisia to bolster a long-standing policy of promoting a pro-Soviet variant of Arab unity.
- In other areas of the Third World, we assume Moscow will use whatever enhanced political clout it gains with Libya to press for coordinated action -- in the Caribbean and Africa, for example -- where the two countries sometimes work at cross purposes, and where Libyan activities sometimes run afoul of initiatives undertaken by Moscow's other ally, Cuba. [redacted]

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Military Support. In the short term, Moscow probably will continue following its present course of supplying Libya with fairly large numbers of weapons to defend Libyan territory from US naval and air attacks, and focus its military advisory efforts on increasing the effectiveness of the equipment already in Libyan hands. Arms deliveries this year -- consisting mostly of air defense equipment -- already have been higher than any previous quarter since 1981. Over the next year, we believe the Soviets are likely to:

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- provide Libya with additional SA-5s, advanced air defense radars and command and control equipment, longer-range coastal defense missiles, and more naval ships. (see appendix);
- emphasize increased and more realistic training of Libyans on existing weapons and newer command systems, including actual missile launches and more hands-on training on SAMs, aircraft, and submarines, but continue to restrict Soviet personnel primarily to an advisory role;
- involve Soviet advisers to a greater degree than before in helping to run the more complex radars and command and control systems, and possibly to assist in operating them during crises;
- make intelligence sharing a more regular feature of their support to Libya. [redacted]

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[redacted] we expect that in future crises off Libya, Soviet surface combatants again will set up early warning patrols near hostile forces and pass the information through a Soviet ship stationed in Tripoli harbor. To assure Qadhafi of timely warning of an attack, the Soviets may even be willing to maintain a naval ship in port. [redacted]

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Use of Libyan Military Facilities. We believe the USSR is likely to use Qadhafi's fears of further US attacks to try to expand its use of Libyan ports and airfields. At a minimum the Soviet Navy probably will increase its visits to Libyan ports and use Tobruk more regularly to replenish and repair submarines and ships. It would rely on Soviet auxiliaries that would be temporarily deployed there to ease somewhat its dependence on support ships stationed in Tartus, Syria. Soviet IL-38 ASW and reconnaissance aircraft already have increased the number and length of deployments to Libya, and we expect this trend to continue. [redacted]

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If the Soviets wanted to show firmer support for Libya, and also felt more confident about Libyan defensive capabilities, they probably would consider regular use of Libyan ports and airfields. They could station several logistics ships permanently in Tobruk, giving them an alternative to their naval support contingent in Tartus. Moscow also could keep a continuous naval air reconnaissance presence in the Mediterranean by rotating pairs of IL-38 aircraft to Libya as it does in South Yemen. [redacted]

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If Qadhafi Pressed for a Deeper Soviet Commitment

If Qadhafi's heightened sense of insecurity persists after his current crisis with the West subsides -- a phenomenon we can not predict with certainty -- he may seek a deeper and more abiding relationship with the Soviets. One sign of his interest in doing so may be Libyan responsiveness on the political issues of importance to Moscow noted above. There could also be a number of other political and military manifestations as well. [redacted]

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Signing a Friendship Treaty. The signing of a friendship treaty would signal that Moscow and Libya were moving toward a more fundamental readjustment in relations. So far, the Soviet Union has been unwilling to enter such an agreement with Libya, despite negotiations over the past several years, probably because Qadhafi wants Moscow's commitment to his direct defense. In late March a Soviet Foreign Ministry spokesman declared that Soviet-Libyan relations did "not need strengthening by legal acts" and that the USSR was not discussing such a treaty with Libya. Were Qadhafi to moderate this demand for a defensive commitment, the Soviets could come to view the treaty as a way of institutionalizing ties with Libya to help ensure continuity in the relationship after Qadhafi. It would also serve as a symbol of their solidarity with Arab states in the face of a growing US threat. [REDACTED]

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Even then, however, while such a treaty would formalize the military and political dimensions of the Soviet-Libyan relationship, its terms would not necessarily alter appreciably the fundamental dynamics of the relationship. In our view, Moscow would still avoid a formal commitment to the preservation of Qadhafi's regime, and Qadhafi would retain his independence. If the treaty were written as a mutual defense treaty, it would represent an extreme step not even taken with Syria. [REDACTED]

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Expanded Arms Relationship. If the Soviet-Libyan military relationship were expanded in quantitative terms, there probably also would be a qualitative improvement in the arms supplied. The Soviets, for example, could provide Libya with MIG-29 fighter aircraft (long reported to be sought by Tripoli) and antiship cruise missiles. Less likely, but within the Soviet inventory, would be advanced weapons systems like the SA-10 and SA-11 air defense systems, the SU-24 Fencer light bomber, and Soviet manned AWACS (see appendix). [REDACTED]

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Military Bases. While Qadhafi has requested Soviet support, he has a strong need to be his own man and would never willingly permit himself to be a tool of the Soviets. But Qadhafi's insecurity might compel him to deepen his involvement with Moscow by setting aside his predisposition against foreign bases. If he does, he will confront Moscow with a difficult decision with long-term implications. [REDACTED]

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A permanent naval presence in Libya could result in considerable advantages for the Soviets in the region, and lead to the stationing of surface combatants, submarines, and reconnaissance and strike aircraft in Libyan ports and airfields dedicated to Soviet use. A Soviet basing and support area in the remote port of Tobruk would also considerably improve Soviet capabilities to sustain their Mediterranean Squadron -- now totaling some 45 ships. Since they were expelled from Egypt in the early 1970s, the Soviets have been unable to recover fully elsewhere the benefits they received from access to Egyptian ship repair yards. Although facilities at Tobruk are not nearly as extensive as those in Egypt, with exclusive access to several piers and administrative buildings at Tobruk, the Soviets could bring in their own auxiliaries and perhaps a drydock, and provide support similar to that afforded by their base at Cam Ranh in Vietnam. Even a limited forward base in Libya would give the Soviets a better capability to sustain more ships in the region during crises. [REDACTED]

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Moscow also would derive benefit from maintaining a squadron or two (10-20 aircraft) of its naval reconnaissance or antiship strike aircraft in Libya. The Soviet-built airfield at Al Jufra has a large facility that is similar to those in the USSR used for storing air-launched antiship cruise missiles. Such missiles are not in the Libyan arsenal, suggesting that Moscow intends to provide them to Libya, and that it may also have envisioned a contingency use by Soviet aircraft. The Soviet naval TU-16 Badger aircraft would be a likely candidate for deployment to Libya as the Soviets sent these aircraft to Egypt in the early 1970s and have deployed a reinforced squadron in Vietnam. Moreover, reconnaissance TU-16s deployed to Syria three times last year and are visiting now in addition to the IL-38 antisubmarine warfare aircraft which occasionally deploy there. []

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The Soviets probably would reckon that even the potential threat posed by Soviet strike aircraft based in Libya would further complicate NATO planning for general war. Moreover, routine location and technical data on Western naval forces in the Mediterranean from reconnaissance aircraft flying from Libya in peacetime would considerably improve the antisurface warfare planning and attack capabilities of the Soviet Black Sea Fleet and Mediterranean Squadron. Intelligence from the missions probably would be shared with the Libyans, reinforcing the usefulness to Qadhafi of having Soviet aircraft stationed in Libya. []

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A Soviet Balance Sheet

Confronted with a Libyan offer to expand significantly cooperation with Moscow, we assume the Soviets would tote up a balance sheet. []

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From Moscow's point of view, the advantages -- especially of Soviet naval and air bases in Libya -- might be seen as several:

- Prestige and Intimidation. Having established itself in a significantly strengthened position militarily in the southern Mediterranean, the Soviets would be sending a message that they are a force to be reckoned with in the region. Part of this message would be one of intimidation to Southern Europe [] and to North African countries that tilt toward the West or attempt to maintain equidistance between Moscow and the West.
- Deterrence. The Soviets would hope that a naval air strike capability in the Mediterranean would make the US, NATO, and Israel think twice before taking military action contrary to Soviet interests in the region.
- Bolstering Allies. Moscow would be able to trumpet to the Arabs and elsewhere in the Third World that it is a solid friend and that its ability to defend them is genuine. []

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Soviet planners would also, we suspect, calculate that there would be serious disadvantages in grasping a Libyan offer of deep involvement:

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• Hostage to Qadhafi. [redacted]

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The Soviets also would have to consider that the presence of their warships and strike aircraft in Libya would make it much more difficult to remain aloof from a US-Libyan conflict.

- Concern about impermanence. The Soviets are presumably aware of the tenuous nature of Qadhafi's power and the shallow roots of the political movement that holds him in place. With his demise, the Soviets might worry that they would be seen by a potentially hostile successor regime as tied too closely to him and then be thrown out. The Soviets might also be concerned that once Qadhafi felt secure against external threats, he might take back his offer of bases.
- Political fallout. The spectre of Soviet bases in Libya could have an adverse impact on Soviet political goals in the region by disturbing -- but not intimidating -- the moderate Arab states and set back Soviet efforts to improve relations with them. Moreover, in the same manner that the Soviet base in Vietnam has heightened security cooperation among East Asian nations, a base in Libya could have a similar effect among the countries of NATO's southern flank.
- Vulnerability. Strike aircraft in particular would be priority targets for -- and within easy reach of -- NATO during a general war. [redacted]

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Whether Moscow would seek or quickly agree to an expanded relationship with Libya is uncertain. On balance, however, we believe:

- Moscow's most likely response would be a qualified Soviet demurral. Moscow might allow a modest expansion in military support and bide its time until Qadhafi was replaced by a presumably less erratic and possibly more pro-Soviet successor.
- A less likely scenario would be for the Soviets to be drawn into a deeper involvement with Libya by a spiral of violent Libyan conflict with the West. If the confrontation between the US and Libya is protracted and punctuated by occasional hostilities, the likelihood of this occurring would increase, especially if Soviet credibility in the Arab world came under sharp criticism.
- It is also possible that Moscow would be tempted by the potential strategic gain, and significantly expand its military cooperation with Libya; were it to do so, the decision probably would be based on an assumption that once so heavily engaged, the Soviets would then have an ability either to moderate their client or alter the regime. In our judgement, however, this scenario is the least likely. [redacted]

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Appendix: Prospective Soviet Arms to Libya

In response to Libyan requests for urgent resupply of military equipment, the Soviets are likely to consider providing a variety of weapons and support systems. This appendix identifies a series of weapons and training support that Moscow could provide over the next year or two depending on how strong a commitment it intends to give Libya. These discussions are not meant to be all inclusive, but are intended to provide a range of potential Soviet actions -- from the most likely to the highly unlikely -- to support Libya. Even if the Soviets provide more advanced weapons, moreover, lack of Libyan expertise and their poor performance on Soviet arms during the US airstrikes indicate that the threat to US forces would not be considerably increased. [REDACTED]

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Continued Low-Key Support

Moscow probably will continue following its present course of supplying Libya with fairly large numbers of weapons that are well suited to defending Libyan territory from US naval and air attacks, and focus Soviet advisers' efforts on increasing the effectiveness of the equipment already in Libyan hands. Arms deliveries this year -- consisting mostly of air defense equipment -- have been higher than any previous quarter since 1981. (This increase probably reflects initial deliveries from an arms deal possibly signed last year following several years of negotiating problems over Libyan procrastination on debt payments.) [REDACTED]

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More SA-5's and better radar. Moscow probably will expedite the shipment of additional SA-5 equipment, and assist in the rapid construction of more sites. It may also provide a newer variant of the SA-5 missile, which has improved electronic countermeasures capabilities. [REDACTED]

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The Soviets also could bring in more modern radars to increase the SA-5 capabilities. The Tin Shield, for example, which is one of the USSR's most capable early warning radar and is deployed in Syria, would considerably improve Libyan low-altitude warning capabilities, and it is difficult to jam. The USSR also will supply additional SAMs and antiair artillery already in the Libyan inventory -- more SA-8s, for example -- to bolster the close-in defense capabilities of Libyan SA-5 complexes, airfields, and ports. [REDACTED]

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Coastal defense missiles. Moscow could attempt to improve quickly Libyan naval forces. Libya already has deployed the Soviets' 80 km range SSC-3 mobile coastal defense cruise missile system. The Soviets probably would be willing to provide the 300 km range SSC-1b coastal defense missile, which already is deployed in Syria, giving the Libyans the capability to attack ships operating beyond the Gulf of Sidra.

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Furthermore, the mobility of these systems allows for considerable flexibility in choosing launch positions, and also makes them less vulnerable to US retaliation. [REDACTED]

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Ship replacement. The Soviets probably would be able to replace within a year the Nanuchka-class corvette that was sunk by US naval aircraft, and perhaps provide additional Nanuchkas or other units carrying the SS-N-2 antiship cruise missile. Construction of naval ships requires a fairly lengthy lead time, but the Soviets probably could divert units from other customers to meet a more urgent Libyan need. Although the Soviet-supplied Foxtrot-class diesel-powered attack submarines played no role in the recent crisis, [REDACTED] the Libyans are buying two more Soviet submarines, and Moscow would be able to send Foxtrots from its own inventory. [REDACTED]

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Better command and control systems. The Soviets will be likely to place high priority on upgrading at least the Libyan air defense command and control system to handle the complex coordination of SAMs, fighter aircraft, and surveillance radars during a hostile engagement. Moscow almost certainly calculates that many of the Libyan military problems arise from lack of coordination within the command and control structure, as well as from poor performance by Libyan personnel on Soviet equipment. [REDACTED] one element -- the Cone Dish radio relay/data link -- of the Soviet Vektor-2 automated SAM command, control, and communications system arrived in November with the first shipments of SA-5 equipment to Libya. The KM-1 computer vans also associated with Vektor-2 probably were delivered in early May. Vektor-2 is one of the Soviets' more advanced air defense command and control systems and is used to speed the transmission and processing of information between SA-2, SA-3, and SA-5 facilities. The system was introduced into Syria in late 1982 just prior to the arrival of SA-5s, and now has gone to Vietnam and Cuba. [REDACTED]

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Installation of the Vektor-2 system throughout the Libyan air defenses probably will take several months, and training the Libyans to effectively operate the new command and control system also would require at least to six months to a year. Even then the Soviets likely would have to maintain a strong advisory presence at air defense command posts. [REDACTED]

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The Soviets probably also are taking measures to improve the coordination between elements of the Libyan air defense. [REDACTED]

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We expect that the Soviets would emphasize increased and more realistic training of Libyans on existing weapons and newer command systems, but that they would continue to restrict themselves to an advisory role. Nevertheless, Soviet advisers probably would be involved to a greater degree than before in helping to operate the more complex new radars and automated command and control systems. [REDACTED]

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Increased Support

If Moscow decided to place a higher priority on improving Libyan chances of deflecting a US attack and scoring a hit, it could consider supplying Tripoli with advanced defensive and offensive arms never before exported to the Third World. While transfers of some of these systems still would not substantially improve Libyan military capabilities, they would demonstrate a stronger political support for Libya in the face of a US threat. [REDACTED]

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MIG-29. [REDACTED]

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MIG-29 -- one of the Soviets' newest, most capable fighter aircraft. Because of the aircraft's relatively slow production rate and evidence of other probably higher priority clients like India and Syria, we believe that Tripoli would not receive the MIG-29 for at least several years. If it considered the transfer important enough, however, Moscow could supply limited numbers -- perhaps a squadron of 12 aircraft -- within the next year. [REDACTED]

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We estimate that over the near term a small number of MIG-29s would not significantly enhance the Libyans ability to counter US aircraft. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] the USSR intends to sell its clients an export model equipped with downgraded avionics, which would be inferior to US naval fighters. [REDACTED]

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Antiship cruise missiles. The Soviets could improve Libyan naval capabilities by supplying longer-range antiship cruise missiles on ships and aircraft, and providing newer submarines. Moscow could decide to provide ships like the Nanuchka-class missile corvette already in Libya, but with the somewhat longer-range (110km) SS-N-9 cruise missile that is deployed on Nanuchkas in the Soviet Navy. Tripoli also could acquire the newer Tango or even Kilo-class diesel attack submarines, which have not yet been exported outside the USSR, but it is unlikely soon because Libyan crews apparently already have problems operating their vintage Foxtrot-class units. [REDACTED]

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Construction of specialized missile storage bunkers at the Soviet-built Al Jufra airfield suggests that the Soviets may have already considered providing Libya with long-range air-launched antiship cruise missiles. The Soviets could modify the Libyan TU-22 Blinder bombers, for example, to carry the AS-4 antiship missile, which has the capability to strike ships from a distance of 400km. This would significantly improve Libyan capabilities to conduct standoff attacks on US ships operating in the Gulf of Sidra. The AS-4 is carried on a certain variant of the Soviet TU-22s, but the Libyan bomber model would require at least several weeks of extensive modification and radar upgrades to accommodate the missile. [REDACTED]

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Soviet advisers would have to take a stronger role in training and assisting the Libyans on these weapons. Even the best Libyan pilots would require at least a year to attain a very limited proficiency on MIG-29s, for example, and some Soviet advisers would be necessary to conduct combat missions with newer submarines. [REDACTED]

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Even Stronger Support

If Moscow decided to demonstrate much stronger support for Qadhafi than it has ever been willing to do before, it might consider providing some of its most advanced weapons and intelligence collection systems. The decision to export such arms, however, would force the USSR to make some difficult decisions because of problems producing enough of them for Soviet and Warsaw Pact forces and the risk of compromising its latest technology, on which it depends for its own defense. Although the provision of these weapons is within Soviet capabilities, we believe that none of them are likely to be exported unless preceded by a fundamental shift in the Soviet commitment to Libya. [REDACTED]

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The Soviets could install a spectrum of new air defense weapons and surveillance radars including those mentioned earlier, and essentially operate selected elements of the system, as they did the SA-5 complexes in Syria after the 1982 invasion of Lebanon. The provision of the Soviet SA-10 strategic air defense system or the SA-11 mobile SAM, for example, would represent a major step forward for Libyan air defense capabilities. [REDACTED]

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SA-10. The SA-10 would provide Libya with the Soviets' best capability to counter US air strikes. The system was first deployed in fixed complexes in 1980, and a mobile variant is becoming operational. The relatively small, highly maneuverable missile is capable of engaging targets at low-to-high altitudes at a range of 120km, which, although less than half that of the SA-5, still could provide coverage of most of the Gulf of Sidra. The system includes several of the Soviets' latest early warning and acquisition radars, and Libyans would require more than a year of training even to begin operating it. [REDACTED]

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Moscow will depend on the SA-10 to defend high priority targets in the USSR for many years to come, however, and is unlikely to pass it over to Third World clients in the near term. The system also has experienced considerable production problems, and the Soviets probably want to fulfill their own requirements before exporting it. If the SA-10 were to go to Libya, therefore it probably would be transferred as part of Soviet-manned air defense brigades, and remain in Soviet hands while deployed there. [REDACTED]

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SA-11. To further shore up close in Libyan air defenses, the Soviets might consider supplying the SA-11 mobile SAM, which began replacing older SAMs in the USSR three years ago. The SA-11 was designed to attack smaller, faster, fighter-type targets at a longer distance and at higher altitudes than the SA-6 or SA-8. It also is capable of engaging more targets simultaneously and is far more difficult to jam. The Libyans probably would deploy this SAM around high priority military installations, and it would pose a significantly increased threat to attacking aircraft. [REDACTED]

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Soviet-piloted aircraft. If the Soviets had naval ships and strike aircraft permanently deployed to Libya, they might want to improve Libyan air defenses by sending several of their own squadrons of MIG-23s, MIG-29s, or less likely, MIG-31 Foxhound air defense interceptors. Although these aircraft are not as capable as newer

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US fighters, the use of Soviet pilots on nonexport models still would be a considerable improvement over older-model Libyan MIGs, and would considerably raise the risk to attacking aircraft. [REDACTED]

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SU-24. Tripoli also has requested the Soviet SU-24 Fencer light bomber, [REDACTED] as have Algeria and Iraq, but the USSR has consistently resisted providing this aircraft. Although the SU-24 has been in Soviet forces for over 10 years, it remains the Soviets' premier tactical bomber, and they probably would be hesitant to risk compromising its combat capabilities by exporting it outside the Warsaw Pact. If the Soviets decided to provide some to the Libyans, however, they could modify them for export, and training of Libyan pilots probably would require several years. Libya already has the capability to conduct long-range bombing missions with its TU-22 aircraft, but the faster, smaller Fencer would be much less vulnerable to detection by enemy air defenses, and would give Tripoli better capabilities to attack targets in the Mahgreb and in southern Europe. [REDACTED]

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Cruise missile submarines. In the naval area the Soviets are unlikely to involve any of their own naval forces -- which are no match for the US Sixth Fleet -- in hostilities, but could supply Libya with even longer range cruise missiles. The Soviets' 20-year old J-class diesel-powered submarines carry the 300-km SS-N-3 antiship cruise missile, and several could be transferred to Libya, although no missile-carrying submarine has ever been exported outside the USSR. Diesel submarines are relatively quiet, and, although the J-class is especially vulnerable to attack when it surfaces to fire its missiles, it still would pose a considerably increased Libyan threat to US ships. Again, the Soviets probably would have to maintain a strong advisory presence onboard the submarines in order to carry out any successful combat missions. [REDACTED]

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AWACS. The Soviets could consider temporarily deploying to Libya several of its airborne surveillance platforms -- the TU-126 Moss aircraft or, less likely, the IL-76 Mainstay AWACS (airborne warning and control system). The Moss has been operational since the late 1960s, and is basically an early warning platform that has been used to provide information to ground-based air defense controllers, and it occasionally has directed a small number of air defense fighters during interception operations. The Moss has limited capabilities to track low-altitude aircraft like fighters, however, and only would extend somewhat Libyan radar coverage. [REDACTED]

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The Mainstay has the potential to considerably extend early warning coverage beyond the range of Libyan ground-based radars, and has a good capability to detect and track attacking aircraft and cruise missiles flying over land and water. The system also would be capable of controlling a large number of Libyan or Soviet fighter aircraft during a hostile confrontation over the Gulf of Sidra at some distance from ground controllers. The Mainstay is only now becoming operational in the USSR, however, and the Soviets would be reluctant to forward deploy any of the limited numbers of aircraft to Libya. [REDACTED]

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Both these systems almost certainly would require that the Soviets be in control of the entire Libyan air defense network in order to handle the complex coordination between the airborne platforms, ground-based radars and SAMs, and interceptor aircraft. [REDACTED]

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DDI/SOVA/TWA/AFLAME: [REDACTED] (13 May 86)

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SUBJECT: Opportunities for Increased Soviet Support and Influence in Libya

Internal Distribution

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 3 - SA/DCI
 4 - ED/DCI
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 6 - DDI
 7 - Senior Review Panel
 8-12 - OCPAS/IMD/CB
 13 - Vice Chairman, NIC
 14 - NIO/USSR-EE
 15 - NIO/NESA
 16 - NIC/AG
 17 - PDB Staff
 18 - ILS
 19 - C/DO/SE [REDACTED] 25X1
 20 - C/DDO/NE [REDACTED]
 21 - FBIS/AG, [REDACTED] 25X1
 22 - FBIS/AG, [REDACTED]
 23 - D/NESA
 24 - C/NESA
 25 - C/NESA/AI
 26 - C/NESA/AI/M
 27 - C/OGI/FSIC/CA
 28 - D/SOVA
 29 - DD/SOVA
 30 - EXO/SOVA
 31 - C/ES/CIB
 32 - C/SOVA/RIG
 33 - C/SOVA/NIG
 34 - C/NIG/DPD
 35 - C/NIG/EPD
 36 - C/SOVA/SIG
 37 - C/SIG/FSD
 38 - C/SIG/SPD
 39 - C/SOVA/DEIG
 40 - C/DEIG/DED
 41 - C/DEIG/DID
 42 - SA/SOVA [REDACTED] 25X1
 43 - C/SOVA/TW
 44 - C/SOVA/TW/FA
 45 - C/SOVA/TW/A
 46 - C/SOVA/TW [REDACTED] 25X1
 47 - SOVA/TW [REDACTED] 25X1
 48 - SOVA/TW [REDACTED] CHRONO 25X1
 49 - SOVA/TW/FA [REDACTED] 25X1
 50 - SOVA/TW/FA/CHORNO

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- 53 - Rodney McDaniel
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- 61 - Stephen Bosworth
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- 71 - James A. Placke
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- 84 - Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary Noel C. Koch
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- 85 - Director, DIA
3E258, Pentagon
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- 86 - Dr. Darnell Whitt
Intelligence Advisor
to Under Secretary of Defense for Policy
Rm 4D840, Pentagon
- 87 - DIA
[REDACTED]
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- 88 - [REDACTED]
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DIAC, Bolling AFB
- 89 - Colonel Al Prados, DIA
DIO for Middle East and South Asia
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- 90 - [REDACTED] DIA
JS1-2C
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- 91 - Lt. Gen. Sidney T. Weinstein, USA
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(DAMI-ZA)
Room 2E466, Pentagon
- 92 - Rear Admiral John L. Butts, USN
Director of Naval Intelligence
(NOP-009)
Room 5C600, Pentagon
- 93 - Lt. Gen. William E. Odom, USA
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U12/SAO
Fort Meade, Maryland 20755

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